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CHAL-0500

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17 March 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director (Plans)

SUBJECT : SAC U-2 Photographic Mission on the Northern
and Eastern Periphery of the Chukotsk Peninsula

1. As I reported to you this morning, AFCIN (Colonel Kemp) has inquired for my views regarding the handling of photography which it is the intention of SAC to obtain through peripheral U-2 flights (20 miles from shore) off the Chukotsk Peninsula in the near future. He was particularly concerned about the intended classification of such photography as SECRET and what it might do to the TALENT system.

2. On inquiry it was learned that a proposal for such peripheral flights was coordinated with the Project in mid-December and again within the last couple of weeks. Admittedly it is not AFCIN's responsibility to conduct such coordination so Kemp is only reporting what he has been told.

3. This afternoon [] Lundahl, [] and I have examined this question both in terms of the possible impact of these proposed flights (an alleged total of six) on CHALICE as well as on the TALENT security system which is designed to protect CHALICE. Our view is as follows: We foresee that through exposure of the activity at Eielson (the staging base) the possible tracking by the Soviets, a possible incident in flight, a possible landing of the craft on Soviet territory in the face of emergency, in the processing of the film at March Field, and in the proposed handling of the processed material and information in the Air Force SENSINT Security Control System -- in developments pertaining to any one or all of these, the real possibility of circumstances which could jeopardize future CHALICE efforts at major highest priority targets. Perhaps of equal importance is the shadow which would be cast upon our historic CHALICE activity and the cover which has seemingly been adequate to permit continuing activity.

4. The intricacies of the points alluded to above are such that we are unable this afternoon to completely perform necessary analysis and

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to weigh each element and its threat precisely. At most, the burden of our comment is to ask the question: What's the hurry? And to strongly express our view that the hurry cannot be justified in terms of the targets that are the object of these flights since within the area outlined there are no highest priority requirements of the ARC (a tabulation which includes the interests of the Air Force as well as the community).

5. Recommendation: That high level representation be registered as appropriate to cause the projected SAC flights to be postponed pending a careful and thorough examination of the effects of such flights on this Government's aerial reconnaissance directed against the Soviets.

[Redacted Signature]

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JAMES O. REBER
Chief, Special Requirements Staff
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cc: Asst to DD/I(P) (cy 2)
Director PIC (cy 3)
CIA TSO (cy 4)
Security/Admin Br/DPD-DD/P (cy 5)
Ops Br/DPD-DD/P [Redacted] (cy 6)

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This document contains information
referring to Project BALANCE

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